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AUTHOR Stevenson, Robert L.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

A study analyzed the content of "Pravda," the major newspaper of the Soviet Communist Party and "Vremya," the main evening news program of Soviet television for changes that could be attributed to Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev's policy of "glasnost" (openness). The "Pravda" sample consisted of 18 editions drawn systematically from the first nine weeks of 1987, while the "Vremya" sample was limited to two weeks in January and the first two weeks of the regular World View service which began in February. Results indicated that the news broadcasts were more internationally attuned than "Pravda" and more reflective of "glasnost." The language of "Vremya" and "Pravda" was dull and burdened with ideological excess. Non-exceptional events--texts of speeches, greetings and toasts that fall under the category of protocol news--seemed the staple of Soviet reporting. Surprisingly, Western Europe was covered far more extensively than the Eastern Bloc. Based on these findings, researchers arrived at three tentative conclusions: (1) although there is some open and critical reporting, "Pravda" and "Vremya" remain more like they were in 1967 than like today's Western media; (2) the Soviet Union has shifted its attention from Eastern Europe to its competitors in the West, especially the United States; and (3) there is almost an obsession with equivalence between the two superpowers. These data indicated that talk of "glasnost" in Soviet journalism is clearly an overstatement. (Tables of data and three pages of references are included.) (AEW)

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# SOVIET MEDIA IN THE AGE OF GLASNOST

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Robert L. Stevenson
Hoyt Childers
Peter West
Susan Marschalk

School of Journalism
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

CS210615

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Stevenson is professor of journalism at UNC-CH, where Childers, West and Marschalk are graduate students.

## ABSTRACT

### Soviet Media in the Age of Glasnost

Robert L. Stevenson, Hoyt Childers, Peter West and Susan Marschalk, School of Journalism, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill NC 27514.

This paper reports a content analysis of *Pravda*, the chief organ of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, and *Vremya*, the main evening news program of Soviet television, in early 1987. The analysis included a range of descriptive variables such as geographic location, main topic, source, etc., as well as variables appropriate to the concept of glasnost, or openness, and coverage of the United States. Some changes seem evident in Soviet media, particularly in television, but criticism of Soviet officials and activities is still limited, and coverage of the United States is uniformly critical. Glasnost may be revolutionary by Soviet standards, but Western readers and viewers will find Soviet media in the age of glasnost more like Soviet media in the old days than Western media.


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# Soviet Media in the Age of Glasnost

## Introduction

A specter is haunting Eastern Europe. It is the specter of glasnost. Glasnost, which comes from the same root as the Russian word for "voice," is usually translated as "openness" and refers to a wide-ranging series of reforms introduced into the Soviet Union by party General Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev (Aksyonov, 1987; Baranov and Seleznez, 1987). The reforms appear to be intended mostly to breath life into a creaky economic system but are reflected publicly in new cracks in a closed political system and, most dramatically, in changes in the mass media the political system controls. If *Pravda* reveals the truth of the Soviet reality, it appears that its truth may be undergoing something close to revolutionary change (Cullen, 1986; Quinn-Judge, 1986; Moody, 1986; Lee, 1987; Mickiewicz, 1987; Remnick, 1987).

In this paper, we will look at the content of the main organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, *Pravda*, and the main news program on Soviet TV, *Vremya* or "Time," as they promote and reflect glasnost in early 1987. Our analysis will be both quantitative and qualitative and will focus on two areas. The first is a new style of coverage of mostly domestic affairs that would not have appeared in earlier regimes. The key elements of glasnost-era news are information and criticism, both traditionally scarce in Soviet media. The second is foreign coverage and particularly reporting about the United States, the long-standing bete noire of the Soviet Union and its current rival for world opinion. As prelude to our analysis, we begin with a discussion of the role of mass media in the Soviet Union and the changes in the Soviet system that have made glasnost a familiar word around the world.

## Soviet Theory of the Press

Ever since Siebert and his colleagues introduced their four theories of the press (Siebert et al., 1956), we have talked about a communist press theory (or Soviet Communist theory, as they called it), but there is no single source for such a theory. Marx himself wrote frequently about the press but mostly while a young man in Germany defending his radical journal from government attack (Padover, 1974). Although he usually defended free expression, it was for himself and not his critics. His actions in later life — certainly his monopoly of information in the years of the Communist Inter-

nationale — argue against any belief in Western pluralism.

It was Lenin, more than Marx, who defined mass media as an instrument of the party, a role that we still associate with a "communist theory" of mass media. In his famous outline for revolution, *Where to Begin,* Lenin (1973) argued that the press was a superstructure on which a political party organization could be built. And he assigned tasks that are still the basis of a communist press:

> The role of a newspaper, however, is not limited soley to the dissemination of ideas, to political education, and to the enlistment of political allies. A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser. In this last respect it may be likened to the scaffolding round a building under construction, which marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, enabling them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organised labour.

With some minor accommodations to leadership style and outside forces, Soviet mass media continue in the mold established by Lenin. They are an instrument of the party, a part of the control apparatus, and always a monopoly of the political leadership. Hopkins (1970, ch. 2) notes how the personalities of the first three Soviet leaders influenced mass media. He argues that neither Stalin nor Khrushchev added significantly to Lenin's press theory. Under Stalin, the media became a servile "company press," while in the Khrushchev years, they were allowed some independence consistent with the intellectual and political thaw that marked his regime.

The imprint of the Soviet leader's personality continued after Khrushchev. The media under Brezhnev fell into the same kind of lethargic stupor that infected the Soviet economy. But unlike earlier times, the Soviet people could not be isolated from the outside world. Brezhnev's policy of detente matched an active engagement with the world in foreign affairs with a tightening of social control at home and persecution of dissidents unlike anything since the Stalin purges. Despite that, however, more and more Soviets had first- or at least second-hand contact with the West (and with the icons of the Western information age and pop culture) and seemed less willing to accept a media reality that ignored real events in favor of a predictable litany of socialist achievements and exhortations (Hollander, 1972). Smith (1976) and Kaiser (1976), both reporters in Moscow in the early 1970s, describe the difficulty of verifying even the most simple datum

of fact: a thick pall of smoke from a forest fire covered Moscow for weeks but went unexplained; a family learned only unofficially and after months of inquiry that a daughter had died in a plane crash officials never acknowledged; changes in the party hierarchy had to be inferred from pictures of officials atop Lenin's tomb — and sometimes even the photos were altered before publication. Despite occasional efforts to brighten the media, notably a campaign to compete with foreign radio (Lisann, 1975), the Brezhnev reign was noted more for the popularity of underground samizdat publications and probably greater reliance on outside information sources than for innovation in the domestic Soviet media. After the dull Brezhnev years and the short regencies of Andropov and Chernenko, it is not surprising that the energy and personality of Gorbachev appeared with the refreshing vigor of a Russian spring after a cold, gray winter.

## Glasnost

Kremlin watchers are still debating the source and purpose of glasnost, and no one pretends to know how it will permanently influence Soviet society (Walker, 1986; Roxburgh, 1987; Nagorski, 1987; Doder, 1986). However, fragments of an outline explaining glasnost might look something like this: Gorbachev inherited a stagnant economy that was steadily falling behind the West in innovation and productivity; several of Brezhnev's foreign policy initiatives — establishment of client states in the Third World and introduction of a new generation of missiles in Eastern Europe, for example — had led to costly financial obligations with little political payoff; the solution was a massive overhauling of the top-heavy bureaucracy that ran every aspect of the country and encouragement of the kind of individual initiative that apparently was working in China. The goal, it should be remembered, was a more efficient dictatorship, not Western liberalism. The glasnost model was certainly the disciplined efficiency of East Germany, not the open pluralism of West Germany.

For Gorbachev, glasnost meant enlisting the nation's huge mass media apparatus to outflank the entrenched party and government aparatchiki who had profited from the existing system and to mobilize the mass of ordinary citizens who had never known individual responsibility and who, quite sensibly, saw dangers in getting too enthusiastic about a reform that could be withdrawn as quickly as it was introduced. Curiously enough, his greatest allies were the intellectuals and growing middle class, increasingly well educated, well acquainted with the shortcomings of Soviet life and the strongest critics of the old regime.

For journalists, glasnost meant an opportunity to delve into areas that

had been off-limits. The turning point may have been the explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear reactor in April 1986. It began in the traditional fashion of Soviet reporting. The incident was not even acknowledged until authorities were pressured byWestern European governments and media. Then came a few details, grudgingly admitted while Gorbachev himself withdrew from public view. After 10 days, however, he reappeared and began to comment on the disaster with the candor and criticism that had characterized his public style from the beginning. Soviet journalists then took their cues from him and began to report details and criticism with a vigor that must have surprised — and perhaps terrified — their readers and viewers. Some limits were quickly established — *Pravda* was criticized for its candor in reporting the privileges of high party officials — but the notion that journalists were the shock troops of Gorbachev's reforms caught on, and most seemed anxious to test their new independence.

What is new about glasnost journalism? A panel assembled by *Public Opinion* magazine (Pell, 1987) argued that Soviet media now present more information and more criticism, but "more" is relative. Since Lenin's time, Soviet media have functioned as a kind of inspector general corps for the regime, encouraging whistle-blowing on low-level bureaucrats and managers and calling attention to malfeasance, misfeasance and simple failure. All within narrow limits, of course. Now the limits have been stretched significantly, but they still exist. According to the *Public Opinion* panel, taboo areas still include almost half of Soviet history, the party itself and its leaders and, of course, communist ideology, including peripheral aspects of it such as atheism.

Still, the waves of fresh air sweeping through Soviet mass media are important enough that they remain newsworthy outside of the Soviet Union. Almost weekly, our own media report breakthroughs in Soviet journalism: critical investigations of the aftermath of Chernobyl, glowing reports on the advantages of McDonald's-style fast food, even stories on the excesses of the KGB (Breath of Fresh Air, 1987; Barnathan and Strasser, 1987; Cuddly Russia?, 1987; Different Degrees of Candor, 1986; Igiebor, 1987; Mickiewicz, 1987; Moody, 1987; Pipes, 1987; Quinn-Judge, 1987; Remnick, 1987; Smith, 1987; Trewhitt, 1987; Walker, 1986). Not everyone is impressed, however. Vassily Aksyonov (1987), who was expelled from the Soviet Union in 1980 after a novel was published in the West, checked out a sampling of new Soviet journalism:

> What's new? Can I distinguish today's Soviet papers from those of yesteryear, which made me so instantly nauseous? Yes, there are things that are new: the mention of some previously taboo prob-

> lems, a certain critical intonation borrowed from dissident groups of the sixties, some steaming rebukes to the "bureaucracy." But...should I state it openly? — the papers still make me nauseous. The foundations of Soviet journalism remain unshakable: not "all the news that's fit to print" but "*our* interpretation of some news that fits *our* print." How could it be otherwise if the press is still "the sharpest weapon of the party"?

Some Western journalists also remain skeptical (Daniloff, 1986; Walker, 1986; Nagorski, 1987; Roxburgh, 1987), but whatever the long-range influence of glasnost on Soviet journalism — a fresh wind or cosmetic coverup — such a departure from the traditions of tightly controlled, predictable journalism deserves a closer look.

## Purpose

Until recently, our ability to examine Soviet mass media systematically was limited to the tiny handful of researchers who combined an interest in communications with knowledge of Russian. Even then, of course, the vast body of journalism in the non-Russian languages of the Soviet Union was beyond scrutiny, and regular access to domestic Soviet broadcasting was impossible outside the country. The translations, such as the *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* and Foreign Broadcast Information Service reports, were incomplete and selective, and special English-language media, such as *Soviet Life*, *Moscow News*, or Radio Moscow, were specially edited for foreign audiences. It was very difficult for most of us to see the world as the Soviet public saw it.

Now the situation is different. With the publication of an English-language translation of *Pravda*, the daily newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, we have full access to the single most important organ of the Soviet Union. With its 16-million-plus daily circulation, *Pravda* is the largest-circulation daily in the world and, as the voice of the only political party in the Soviet Union, one of the most important. Its influence extends to papers of the smaller units of the party — *Moskovskaya Pravda*, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, for example — for which it serves as a model.

With the U.S.-produced English version of *Pravda*, we have — with not unreasonable delay — every word, every picture, every headline of the Russian edition in a format that mirrors the original, even down to the typeface of the distinctive "Pravda" nameplate. In our library, we often

find the Russian and English versions mixed in their adjoining bins, evidence, we suspect, that browsers sometimes overlook the difference between the Cyrillic and Roman alphabets.

The Soviet equivalent of the evening network news — the 30-minute *Vremya* — is also now available in English and Russian thanks to the unique circumstance that the Soviet Union's northern geography requires a series of polar satellites rather than geostationary satellites over the equator to distribute programs to ground transmitters throughout the world's largest country. With a relatively simple tracking system, it is possible to monitor Soviet national programming live from most of North America. A new service from World View, Inc., in Oakdale, Iowa, now markets a package of Soviet news, including the full English and Russian texts of *Vremya* with excerpts of the program itself on a weekly videotape compendium.

With this new and unique access to the full text of the most important paper and most important television news program of the Soviet Union, we decided to examine for ourselves the evidence of radical change in Soviet journalism. Rather than testing any specific hypotheses about the impact of glasnost on *Pravda* and *Vremya*, we chose to undertake a relatively straightforward, traditional, descriptive analysis of the two, circa early 1987, with special attention to coverage that seemed to be inspired by glasnost and coverage of the United States, which might also be the test of a new, open style of politics.

## Methodology

Descriptive content analysis is always a risky business because the decisions about what variables to measure and what categories to use are guided more by pragmatics and convention than theory. Nevertheless, the body of recent cross-national comparative studies (Sreberny-Mohammadi, et al., 1985; Stevenson and Shaw, 1984; Mowlana, 1986; Larson, 1984) points to a standard inventory of variables — topic, geographic location, etc. — that any descriptive study should include. We took these studies as a starting point and modified their procedures to suit our specific interests.

**Variables.** Some variables, such as those noted above, were obligatory, but several others were added to help us focus our analysis on the elements of Soviet media content that seemed most pertinent to the purposes of the study. Several of the variables were related to the Unesco New World Information Order debate, which tried to articulate new functions for the mass media and new definitions of news. The variables were:

1. Type of news. One of the major concerns in most content analyses has

been the mix of foreign and domestic news, with the argument that Western media (or media in general) fail to pay adequate attention to the rest of the world. The figure for international news coverage depends heavily on its definition because a great deal of news concerns relations between the home country and another. Rather than decide arbitrarily whether a story about the Soviet Union and another country was foreign if it took place abroad but domestic if it took place in the Soviet Union, we opted for a three-category variable: purely domestic, international (involving the Soviet Union and a foreign country, regardless of geographic location) and foreign (with no reference to the Soviet Union).

2. Geographic location. This followed the Unesco/IAMCR study definition of geographic regions, but we pulled the Soviet Union itself out of Eastern Europe as a separate category.

3. Main topic. This, too, was taken from the Unesco/IAMCR study with one change. Because so much news in the Soviet media deals with economics, we broke that category into two, one essentially macro-economics — international items, performance of the Soviet economy, goals and accomplishments, etc. — the other basically micro-economics, including stories of individuals, housing projects and labor relations.

4. Time frame. Stories were coded as happening today/yesterday, recently (but with no specific time mentioned) or without a reference to time. This was of interest partly because of the argument in the New World Information Order debate that news should be less concerned with specific events and more with the processes of social change and partly because of the traditional Leninist definition of news as the unfolding of history rather than discreet events. While most of the NWIO debate has been between the Third World and the West, the Soviet media are closer to the model of "development journalism" than are the Western media.

5. Type of story. This category, too, is a product of NWIO debate and Soviet theory. One one hand, Western journalism has been criticized for its orientation toward "coups and earthquakes" and other kinds of disruptive events. In contrast, what is often put forward as more appropriate are protocol and development news. Protocol news is the official comings-and-goings of public officials, exchanges of greetings, etc.; development news is that which is supposed to promote development and to reflect it as well.

6. Source. We coded the source — TASS, other media, Western agencies, etc. — to see where the Soviet Communist Party's flagship newspaper and TV newscast turn for their information.

7. Coverage. We classified each item in *Pravda* according to whether it was a news story, document or statement, column or commentary, picture or cartoon, or part of a roundup of items. For the television material, the

categories were on-location correspondent report, story read by news anchor, and commentary, usually read by an outside journalist or public official.

8. Glasnost. Finally, we tagged each item according to a loose definition of glasnost. Glasnost is something like Justice Stewart's famous comment on pornography: it is hard to define it, but you know it when you see it. In this case, we operationalized glasnost as stories that were characterized by unusual openness and/or criticism, especially those in the tradition of American investigative reporting. Excluded were the traditional how-we-solved-the-problem stories and simple factual reporting of events even though this style of journalism is apparently new. Stories were tagged as glasnost only if they contained significant facts that traditionally had been excluded from the Soviet media, particularly those that reflected badly on the regime, such as comparisons with other countries, negative trends or failures to meet goals. Almost all stories classified as glasnost-related were domestic.

**Sample.** The *Pravda* sample consisted of 18 days drawn systematically from the first nine weeks of 1987. The constructed week included Monday and Thursday from the first week, Tuesday and Friday from the second and Wednesday and Saturday from the third; the sequence was repeated to provide two more weeks. For TV news, we were limited to what must be considered an availability sample of four weeks. It was used because the regular World View service did not begin until February, 1987. We used the first two weeks of that service and added to it two weeks from January, which had been distributed as a market test. A more rigorous sample could be drawn now, but we have no reason to believe that our sample is significantly non-representative. Tests of the Unesco/IAMCR data (Stevenson and Shaw, 1984, ch. 2) and other earlier similar investigations showed that general patterns of news content are not seriously affected by the sample design.

All separate editorial items were coded (*Pravda*, of course, has no advertising). If a cartoon or picture was typographically and editorially related to a story, it was considered part of the story. If not, it was coded as a separate item. Each item of a roundup — a common editorial device — was coded separately. Similar criteria were used for coding the TV data, for which we used the printed English transcript rather than the videotapes themselves.

**Coding.** Several coders worked together to develop coding procedures and to refine the operational definitions of the variables. After we had established adequate coder reliability coders worked independently.

## Results

We have chosen to present the results of this probe into Soviet journalism in the era of glasnost two ways. In this section, we discuss the quantitative findings, supplemented occasionally with examples and other evidence. A selection of specific stories, which together give the reader a sense of the *Pravda* and *Vremya* style that the numbers cannot, is included as an appendix.

We have put most of the results of this analysis of the Soviet Union's premier print and TV news media into two tables that summarize the results of the quantitative analysis. A few comments will help put them into perspective.

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Tables 1 and 2 about here

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There are differences between the two media that cannot be explained as flukes. Television is more internationally minded than *Pravda* and more oriented toward glasnost-inspired reporting. This can be seen in its greater attention to foreign and international news, greater concern with today's and yesterday's news and even greater attention to disruptive events. Simple, straight-forward pieces that are the staple of Western reporting — fighting in Beirut, an earthquake in Latin America, protests in Paris — appear with some regularity. They must be eye-opening to viewers accustomed to a diet of foreign news traditionally limited to labor and social unrest in the West and steady progress toward socialism elsewhere. This trend is in line with Daniel Pipes's (1987) comment that Soviet television has been more enthusiastic about glasnost than *Pravda*, which is still under the influence of the older, more traditional party bureaucrats.

Still, to anyone accustomed to Western reporting, both *Pravda* and *Vremya* come across as slow, plodding and frequently professionally inept. The language — admittedly in a foreign translation — is dull and burdened with ideological excess. After reading only a few issues or transcripts, these two flagship Soviet media become predictable. The stories that get reported in Western media as examples of glasnost — the kind words about American fast food, the criticism of perks for high-ranking party officials — are newsworthy here because they are exceptional events. The non-exceptional events remain the staple of Soviet news. These include the full texts of speeches, greetings and toasts that fall under the category of protocol news, the stories of progress in building socialism that are the heart of development news and the orchestrated view of the world that seems to consist mostly of support for Gorbachev and condemnation of the

United States around the world.

It is curious that Western Europe gets more attention than Eastern Europe in both media, an exception to the general global pattern of regional focus in foreign news and a change from the Soviet media analyzed in the 1979 Unesco/IAMCR study (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1985; Stevenson and Shaw, 1984). And the United States is something of an obsession, particularly to *Vremya*, which devoted 13% of its total coverage to stories from North America; if the total included those datelined in other countries but about the United States, the total would be considerably higher.

A non-rigorous look at *Pravda's* coverage of the United States (Lichter, et al., 1987) concluded that the appearance of some bad news about the Soviet Union in the glasnost-era Soviet media is not matched by any good news about the United States. In fact, much of the coverage of the United States — and the West in general — seems to be an obviously orchestrated effort to match Western criticism of the Soviet Union. Cases in point are the persecuted intellectual dissident stories that are blatant efforts to find Western equivalents of Andrei Sakharov and the Soviet response to charges of listening devices in the new American embassy in Moscow.

The comparisons in Table 2 show that indeed glasnost is concentrated in domestic coverage. Other differences between domestic and international or foreign coverage are also more or less what one expects: "bad news" of disruptive events does get considerable attention in foreign reporting; the heavy emphasis on economics is largely a domestic phenomenon; TASS is a significant source for foreign and international stories but not for domestic items.

These simple crosstabs only hint at the kind of analysis that can be carried out with even a simple content analysis. A better flavor of the two premier Soviet media can be gained from a reading of the short excerpts we have provided as an appendix to the paper. From these, one detects a style of reporting and writing quite at odds with the standards of a Western newspaper. *Pravda* and *Vremya* today probably have more in common with Lenin's style of journalism than with, say, *The New York Times*. The style is subjective and preachy but probably appropriate to media that are openly agents of the government and instruments of its control of the population.

## Conclusions

We offer three tentative conclusions about Soviet news media in the age of glasnost. One, based on the quantitative analysis, is about glasnost itself. The second is based on a comparison of the results of this study with the earlier Unesco study. And the third is a serendipitous observation about

the emphasis on equivalence between the Soviet Union and the United States.

1. Glasnost. Those who expect Soviet mass media to have assumed a glasnost role similar to that of the critical, watchdog Western media will be disappointed. *Pravda* and *Vremya* in early 1987 remain more like they were in 1967 than like today's Western media. But there are changes, important changes, that are evident even without the benefit of a comparable assessment 20 years earlier. There is open and critical reporting — up to a point, of course — but these two premier Soviet organs do seem to be on the cutting edge of great changes taking place in the Soviet Union.

2. Change. There is change in the kinds of news the two premier Soviet media cover and the way they cover it. Events not immediately linked to the Soviet Union or to the Marxist theory of history do get reported. More attention is paid to today's and yesterday's events rather than to the unfolding of history. The Soviet Union's focus of attention has shifted from its neighbors in Eastern Europe to its competitors in Western Europe and especially to the United States.

3. Equivalence. To the extent that *Pravda* and *Vremya* reflect the world view of Soviet leaders — and no one suggests they do anything but that — there is almost an obsession with equivalence between the two superpowers. For every Sakharov, there must be a Hyder; for every bug in the new American embassy in Moscow, there must be two in the Soviet embassy in Washington; for every Western offer to destroy a nuclear missile, there must be a Soviet offer to destroy two.

To talk of glasnost in Soviet journalism as revolution seems clearly to be an overstatement. It is reform, significant but controlled reform. Martin Walker (1987), the *Guardian's* experienced Moscow correspondent, may have found the best metaphor to describe changes in the Soviet media:

> It is important to keep this [new openness] in perspective. Freedom of the press was not breaking out across the Soviet Union; simply, the straps of the straitjacket were being loosened slightly, to allow the press to report the corruption and bureaucracy, and air the criticism that the Kremlin found useful. This amounted to a subtler form of media management.

Table 1. Characteristics of *Pravda* and *Vremya*.

| | *Pravda* n=530 | *Vremya* n=417 |
|---|---|---|
| Type of news | | |
| Domestic | 49% | 35% |
| International | 24 | 29 |
| Foreign | 27 | 37 |
| Location | | |
| Soviet Union | 53% | 38% |
| East Europe | 7 | 5 |
| West Europe | 11 | 19 |
| Nor. America | 8 | 13 |
| Lat. America | 5 | 6 |
| Africa | 3 | 3 |
| Asia/Pacific | 8 | 10 |
| Middle East | 3 | 3 |
| Multi-region/none | 3 | 4 |
| Main topic | | |
| International politics | 28% | 32% |
| Domestic politics | 11 | 24 |
| Military/defense | 3 | 5 |
| Macro-economics | 9 | 12 |
| Micro-economics | 16 | 7 |
| International aid | 0 | 0 |
| Social services | 3 | 1 |
| Crime/law/justice | 2 | 2 |
| Culture/arts | 6 | 7 |
| Religion | 0 | 0 |
| Science/technology | 9 | 4 |
| Sports | 3 | 0 |
| Entertainment | 1 | 0 |
| Personalities | 1 | 1 |
| Human interest | 4 | 1 |
| Education | 2 | 0 |
| Ecology/environment | 1 | 1 |
| Natural dis/accidents | 2 | 3 |
| Other | 1 | 0 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Time frame of event | | |
| Today/yesterday | 29% | 36% |
| Recently | 42 | 28 |
| None | 29 | 37 |
| Type of news | | |
| Protocol | 3% | 19% |
| Development | 26 | 18 |
| Disruptive events | 8 | 13 |
| Non-disruptive events | 25 | 30 |
| Routine, recurring event | 6 | 8 |
| Background to event | 16 | 3 |
| Non-event background | 16 | 9 |
| Source | | |
| Staff | 31% | 72% |
| TASS | 34 | 22 |
| Western media | 2 | 0 |
| Other Soviet media | 3 | 1 |
| Public officials | 3 | 1 |
| Private citizens | 5 | 1 |
| Unidentified | 21 | 3 |
| Type of item | | |
| News story | 47% | |
| Letter | 4 | |
| Document/statement | 3 | |
| Roundup | 31 | |
| Picture/cartoon | 6 | |
| Column/commentary | 9 | |
| Correspondent report | | 26% |
| Anchor report | | 72 |
| Commentary | | 2 |
| Glasnost | | |
| Yes | 9% | 17% |
| No | 91 | 83 |

Table 2. Characteristics of News in *Vremya* and *Pravda* by Type of News.

| | *Vremya* | | | *Pravda* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Dom | Intl | For | Dom | Intl | For |
| | n=144 | 119 | 154 | 259 | 128 | 143 |
| Location | | | | | | |
| Soviet Union | 100% | 15% | 0% | 100% | 20% | 0% |
| East Europe | 0 | 6 | 8 | 0 | 16 | 9 |
| West Europe | 0 | 25 | 32 | 0 | 32 | 21 |
| Nor America | 0 | 11 | 25 | 0 | 16 | 16 |
| Lat America | 0 | 3 | 12 | 0 | 6 | 12 |
| Africa | 0 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 8 |
| Asia/Pacific | 0 | 24 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 17 |
| Middle East | 0 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 10 |
| Multi-region/none | 0 | 13 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 7 |
| Main Topic | | | | | | |
| Intl politics | 8% | 85% | 12% | 4% | 66% | 38% |
| Domestic politics | 10 | 3 | 53 | 9 | 7 | 20 |
| Military/defense | 3 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 9 |
| Macro- economics | 30 | 3 | 2 | 11 | 6 | 6 |
| Micro- economics | 17 | 1 | 3 | 27 | 4 | 9 |
| Intl aid | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Social services | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| Crime/law/justice | 1 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Culture/arts | 15 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 2 | 1 |
| Religion | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Science/technology | 10 | 0 | 1 | 16 | 3 | 3 |
| Sports | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 0 |
| Entertainment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Personalities | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Human interest | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 3 |
| Education | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| Ecology/environment | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Natural dis/accidents | 1 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Other | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Time | | | | | | |
| Today/yesterday | 41% | 46% | 23% | 24% | 41% | 27% |
| Recent | 29 | 24 | 29 | 40 | 40 | 47 |
| None | 30 | 29 | 49 | 36 | 19 | 26 |

Type of story

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Protocol | 13% | 47% | 3% | 2% | 7% | 1% |
| Development | 47 | 3 | 2 | 44 | 9 | 10 |
| Disruptive event | 3 | 1 | 31 | 4 | 2 | 20 |
| Non-disruptive event | 14 | 35 | 42 | 14 | 41 | 32 |
| Routine event | 8 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 9 | 18 |
| Background to event | 3 | 1 | 5 | 13 | 20 | 18 |
| Non-event background | 12 | 7 | 8 | 19 | 12 | 15 |

Source

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Staff | 97% | 64% | 57% | 25% | 37% | 35% |
| TASS | 2 | 24 | 38 | 33 | 43 | 29 |
| Western media | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Other Soviet media | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Public official | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 1 |
| Private citizen | 0 | 3 | 0 | 9 | 2 | 1 |
| Unidentified | 0 | 4 | 0 | 26 | 13 | 24 |

Coverage

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Correspondent report | 46% | 22% | 11% | | | |
| Anchor report | 54 | 75 | 86 | | | |
| Commentary | 0 | 3 | 3 | | | |
| News story | | | | 47% | 59% | 36% |
| Letter | | | | 6 | 2 | 0 |
| Document/statement | | | | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| Roundup | | | | 27 | 23 | 44 |
| Picture/cartoon | | | | 7 | 5 | 6 |
| Column/commentary | | | | 11 | 8 | 8 |
| Other | | | | 0 | 1 | 0 |

Glasnost

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 38% | 7% | 6% | 15% | 6% | 3% |
| No | 62 | 93 | 94 | 85 | 94 | 97 |

## Appendix: Examples of Soviet Mass Media Coverage

### Pravda

### Glasnost

"Restructuring and Sociology" (Story on inadequacies of Soviet social science):

> Let us say right out that for a long time the social sciences have been at the rearguard of society, rather than the vanguard. In essence, they trailed along behind practice, in large part restricting themselves to repeating, explaining, and approving decisions that had already been made by the party.... On the whole, Soviet sociology has great potential. But the pace of its development has been excessively slow in the last 10-15 years. As a result, sociology here has developed much less vigorously than, say in Poland or Hungary, not to mention developed capitalist countries. We publish one 'purely' sociological journal, while in the US the sociological association alone publishes eight such journals, and there are several dozen of them altogether. While we will have graduated our first 100 professional sociologists with degrees in 1989, the 260 sociology departments in the US graduate 6,000 specialists annually, and about 90,000 Americans are familiar with the fundamentals of sociology (Feb. 6).

"On Restructuring our Policy" (Policy statement from Communist Party Central Committee meeting in January):

> ... during the late '70s and early '80s the country began to lose momentum in its movement forward. Difficulties and unsolved problems began to accumulate in the economy and the social and spiritual spheres; stagnant tendencies and other phenomena alien to socialism appeared.... Major shortcomings have accumulated in the operation of institutes of socialist democracy, in the planning process, and in the style and methods of management. Many party organizations could not maintain principled party positions, did not devote the necessary attention to the strict observance of Leninist principles and standards of party life, and did not conduct a vigorous struggle against negative phenomena, lax discipline,

increasing drunkenness, embezzlement, and bribe taking. The proper rebuff was not given to departmentalism, regionalism, and nationalistic manifestations (Jan. 29).

"Being Real Fighters: Notes from the Belorussian Journalists' Congress"

The delegates concluded that the press was still poorly, unsystematically, and without the requisite aggressiveness covering such key directions in restructuring as ... profoundly reconstructing the national economy on the basis of scientific and technical advances. Each speaker touched upon critical pieces in the press and reaction to them. Sometimes a voice is heard, asking that they tone down their sharpness. Everyone knows who is bothered by openness: The bureaucrat, buried beneath antiquated rules and regulations; the people who follow the prevailing winds, hoping to sit things out in a quiet backwater; and the chameleons who are blinded by the light of public opinion (Feb. 4).

U.S. Coverage

"Talks in Geneva"

Soviet-American talks on nuclear and space-based weapons continue in Geneva.

During the past week a number of working meetings were held within the framework of the groups on space, strategic offensive weapons, and intermediate-range nuclear missiles. Work has begun on preparing joint drafts of documents.

Delegation heads and group leaders are engaged in substantive discussions (Jan. 24).

"Observing the Reykjavik Agreements"

Reports have appeared in the press that despite assurances by the White House of its desire to strictly follow the formula adopted in Reykjavik, the US administration is leaning toward introducing "the toughest demands ever put forward by the United States" in the American draft. Newspapers allege that the USA intends to

propose deliberately unacceptable verification measures that were secretly approved by the new presidential assistant on national security, Carlucci, a month ago.... The American press exaggerates the issue of the supposedly "insurmountable difficulty" of verifying the observance of a future agreement (March 2).

"Tempting Idea?" (Story on U.S. naval activity in Mediterranean):

US Secretary of State G. Schultz has voiced the threat of direct military intervention in Lebanon under the pretext of "retaliation for the seizure of hostages." ... The Washington correspondent for the newspaper *Le Matin* writes: the idea of military action is being looked upon more and more favorably in the US, which has been shaken by "Irangate" and the recent series of kidnappings of Americans in Beirut. In the opinion of *Le Matin*, a punitive expedition in Lebanon would not entail great losses and would be greeted enthusiastically in the US, even if some of the hostages suffered as a result. Therefore the idea appears tempting to a president helplessly watching his reputation decline (Feb. 3).

**Vremya**

**Glasnost**

"State Inspection - Novosibirsk Footwear Factory," Correspondent Report:

Novosibirsk shoemakers know how to make good boots, shoes and young people's footwear, but only in small lots, for sale at established prices. Mass-produced footwear, it is said, leaves something to be desired...

"It is only recently that such orderliness has come to the raw materials warehouse; when Valentina Vasilyevna Osipova inspected it for the first time, it wasn't like this at all (Dec. 6).

"Feed Problems at the Cattle Farms of the Voronezh Oblast," Correspondent Report:

And all this (sloppy production methods) is caused by worker

indifference. We're back to the human factor without which even the most progressive technology will not give required results (Dec. 3).

"Gromyko in Novgorod," (Story about trip of former foreign minister Andrei Gromyko to this city) by Correspondents and verbatim Gromyko speech :

Gromyko: "However, in light of the stringent demands made by the Party Congress and the January Central Committee Plenum, the changes taking place do not constitute a real turning point (in economic restructuring.) Let's face the truth squarely. The severity of our problems is not abating — problems in production, quality control, the improvement of living conditions, and all aspects of community services. The heightened expectations of the population are literally knocking at the doors of the oblast's Soviet People's Deputies, its executive committee, and other local soviets. These units bear no small responsibility of stagnation in many areas" (Dec. 4).

"Phil Donohue Program on Soviet Television," (Story about link-up between Soviet-U.S. audiences hosted by Donohue) commentary by Vladimir Posner:

Moreover, they (the programs) are useful for us because in this manner we can look at ourselves through the eyes of others, and that is always instructive (Dec. 15).

U.S. Coverage

"Hyder's Hunger Strike," (Story about American physicist Charles Hyder's protest hunger strike in Washington) by Washington Correspondent:

You'll always meet a few peace activists in Lafayette Park, across from the White House, where astrophysicist Hyder is carrying out his hunger strike...The police never take their eyes off the protesters. At twilight, they often arrest the peace partisans and confiscate their posters.

> The authorities have made it so American journalists don't want to go near Dr. Hyder. But the people come to him, youth is drawn to him. Look how touchingly, how reverently, the young relate to the scientist...They recognize the sincerity of Dr. Hyder's protest, of his hunger strike for mankind's right to live (March 13).

"Public Indignation in USA Over Verdict of New York Court," (Story about acquittal of New York police officer who shot an elderly, deranged black woman.) by New York Correspondents:

> Eleanor Bumpurs — Grandma Eleanor, as she was called by the neighborhood children she took care of — is only one of many victims of the American racists in uniform, whether it be a police uniform or a Ku Klux Klan costume.
>
> In New York alone, almost 200 blacks have been killed by racists over the past several years. Racism — a deeply rooted fact of American life (March 10).

"Resolution to Impeach Reagan Offered in U.S. Congress," Anchor Report:

> As a result of the sale of arms to Iran and the transfer of the funds received for them to the Nicaraguan Contras, a resolution to place U.S. President Reagan under articles of impeachment and to remove him from office has been offered in U.S. House of Representatives (March 6).

"Solidarity With the Homeless in Washington," by Washington Correspondent:

> The spirits of the people rise, warmed — as will always happen — by the sanguine adrenalin of solidarity, when conviction, not the dollar, rules the conscience (March 6).

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